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An Inaugural Dissertation
on
Apoplexy,
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of
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Apoplexy.

The following history of Apoplexy, I have drawn up from the Lectures of the Professor of the Institutes. Aware of the correctness, and utility of his observations on this disease (and on diseases in general) I have taken this history from him, with the view of impressing the subject firmly on my mind, and at the same time to comply with the rules of this University.

Did the laws of the University compel the Candidate to present a Dissertation wholly original, I should indeed be at a loss for a subject, since the present Professors have laboured so much, with a view to the perfection of Medicine.

I am proud to acknowledge the debt, I owe to the Professor of the Institutes. That model of Wisdom, Solomon, it is said, gave the following piece of advice, "Walk in the paths,

of wise Men." sensible of the beneficial tendency of this sentence, I feel as if the good Solomon accompanied me, and in addition to the foregoing, observed, "Stray not thou from the paths of Rush.

Apoplexy, has been divided by Cullen into the Sanguineous, and the Serous. The former species, Cullen supposed, depended upon an extravasation of Blood, the latter upon an effusion of Serum in the brain. There can be no necessity for this distinction, for Apoplexy, will be Apoplexy, from whatever cause induced. It would be impossible for the Physician to know, and if he did know, of no importance, whether whether the disease arose in consequence of Blood or Serum. In either case, the remedies would be the same, and therefore the distinction must be entirely useless. Like many of the Nosological diseases, (if this distinction was admitted) we would be obliged to await the death of the Patient, and then dissect his

Brain, in order to ascertain whether the disease was owing to Blood or Serum.

Professor Rush, has arranged Apoplexy under the head of, diseases which affect the Nerves, Muscles, Brain, and Mind, in common with the Bloodvessels. Apoplexy has been defined, that disease in which the external and internal Senses, and the powers of voluntary motion, are in some degree abolished, while the functions of the Heart, Arteries and Lungs, continue to be performed. This disease may be distinguished from Palsy (which is a lower grade of Apoplexy) by its affecting all the powers of sense and voluntary motion, at the same time. It is likewise distinguished from Syncope, by the continuance of Respiration, and the action of the Heart.

The sleep of apoplexy, is known from common sleep, by its coming on more suddenly, being more profound, and more generally attended with snoring. There is usually a relaxation of the Sphincters of the Anus, and Bladder, whilst the peristaltic motion of the Bladder continues.

The Patient is sometimes attack'd suddenly but most frequently, the fit is preceded by some of the following symptoms, viz. Elevated excitement, snoring, in persons, unaccustomed to it. Drowsiness, Giddiness. Numbness in one or both arms, or sides. dull and false vision, Cloudiness over the eyes. Absence of Piles or Gout, in persons affected with them. The face becoming suddenly flushed, the blood is suffused over the whole face, of a dark red colour. This last symptom, constitutes the disease to which Doct. Rush has given the name

of Fascial Apoplexy.

These symptoms continuing for a longer or shorter time, the Patient becomes suddenly deprived of the power of voluntary motion, and of the use of his Senses. He at length falls down, the breathing is noisy and stertorous, the countenance generally flushed, though sometimes pale, the pupil of the eye is dilated, foaming at the mouth, grinding the teeth &c. The disease very frequently terminates in Paralysis, or the Patient is seized with vomiting, and after a profuse perspiration, recovers the powers of his mind &c. The pulse during the continuance of the fit is either Synocha, depressed, intermitting or slow. It has been observed so low as to beat but 7 or 8 strokes in a minute. This slowness of the pulse is more dangerous than quickness.

Apoplexy sometimes occurs without shewing any premonitory symptoms, and when it does, it very generally proves fatal, in consequence of a rupture of a bloodvessel in the Brain.

The Remote Causes of Apoplexy are; excessive exercise of the Understanding. Intemperance in eating and drinking. Insolation, or what is usually termed, a stroke of the Sun. Apoplexy from the last mention'd cause, is unknown in Climates which are uniformly warm; at least it does not occur in the natives of such countries.

The exciting causes of Apoplexy are very numerous, among which are the following. Violent exercise of the whole body. Loud Speaking. The impure air of crowded houses, as Churches, Theatres &c. Tight ligatures about the neck, in the form of Cravats. Intoxication. Stoppage of periodical

hemorrhage. Fumes of Mercury, Lead &c. Violent pas=
sions of the mind. To illustrate this, Doctor Rush, has
elated a case of a German cobler, in this city, who
was greatly irritated by some Boys, blowing the
smoke of tobacco, through the key-hole of his shop.
The cobler pursued them, without catching any one,
they began to tantalize him, he became highly
enraged, and fell dead in an apoplexy.
Cold feet. Doct Rush, mentions two cases of the
disease from cold feet. Overloading the stomach
at supper. Electricity. Sleeping on a wet floor.
Smoking tobacco. Doct. Rush mentions two cases
of apoplexy from this cause. It is induced by
fevers, more especially of a Malignant kind.
It is recorded that in the year 1749. Apoplexies

were Epidemic in Paris. Congestion, of Blood or Water in the brain. When the disease arises from extravasated fluids in the brain, the second fit is generally said to prove fatal.

The Remedies for the forming State of the disease (when there is drowsiness, giddiness, dull and false vision swelling of the face and neck) are, Bleeding. The patient should loose ten or sixteen ounces of blood, and take some purging medicine, with a view to prevent the coming fit. Doct Darwin subscribes to the efficacy of this remedy, he often bled himself whilst riding in his carriage, and thereby arrested the approaching fit. Rest and a purge when these symptoms arise from exercise, bloodletting should be preferred. As this disease always shews a tendency to return, the patient should avoid, as much as possible the remote and exciting cause.

When the disease has formed, and we are called to the patient, the apartment should be cleared of all unnecessary attendants, for impure air is very injurious to persons labouring under Apoplexy. Ligatures, bandages, and clothes, boots or shoes should be removed from the body. The head of the patient is to be elevated, and care should be taken that no officious attendant applies any volatile substance to the nose, or make use of friction to any part of the body. Blood should then be immediately taken from one or both arms, or from the temporal artery, if the pulse be not depressed. When Apoplexy arises from Congestion bloodletting should be prompt, and copious; for if Congestion has not already taken place in the vessels of the head, bleeding will prevent it.

If the pulse be slow, depressed, or intermitting, the Rivenian method of bleeding should be employed. Doctor Rush supposes, that Leeches, applied up the Nose would prove beneficial. This would no doubt be of great service, as it accords so well with the Rivenian method.

In this state of Apoplexy, profuse bleeding, would be highly injurious; we should therefore take away blood gradually. a vein must be opened and a few ounces of blood taken, tie it up – wait until the pulse rises, when it does, open the vein again, take another small quantity, and by this way of proceeding, you will give the system time to arouse, and reach. A sharp pointed body such as a Quill, has been thrust up the nostril in order to rupture a vessel, and produce hemorrhage, this has often done great service.

When Apoplexy arises from worms, or from any poisonous substance in the Stomach, Vomiting should be excited, and will always be useful by removing such substances. Vomiting may be excited by irritating the throat with a feather. Bloodletting should, however, in all instances precede the use of Vomits. The bowels should be opened by the use of large doses of purgative medicines. Clysters should be given, and a Catheter introduced into the Bladder, to draw off the Urine, if the Patient is unable to void it.

When the disease is attended with Plethora, the head may be shaved, and cold water, or pounded Ice, applied to it. If all these remedies be of no service, we must have recourse to Blisters, applied to the upper and lower extremities, and to the neck.

In this low state of the disease, Mustard in the form of Cataplasm, should be applied to the soles of the feet. Electricity. Friction to the extremities Loud and acute sounds, and lastly, the application of the actual Cautery, to the Neck. If these different remedies, should fail to restore the Patient, we will at least console ourselves with the certainty that no exertion on our part, has been awanting.

The Unfavourable signs of this disease, are, when it attacks persons under thirty years of age. Doctor Rush mentions but one case which he cured, under this age. It is mostly fatal when it occurs in Children. When the patient makes an effort to reach his mouth with his hand. When a fever appears late in the disease, When the pulse is intermitting, and when the

face is pale. It is almost always fatal, when it comes on, without any of the premonitory signs.

The favourable symptoms of Apoplexy are, Fever, Vomiting, a quick pulse, general perspiration, Palsy on one side &c. A greater number of persons, recover from Apoplexy brought on by intoxication, than from any other cause.

The Prophylactics, are avoiding indigestible food of all kinds, such as Mince pies, Doctor Rush is of opinion that the great number of Apoplexies, which occur about Christmas, may be attributed to the general use of Mince pies about that period. Temperance in eating and drinking. Changes in the Diet, should be avoided. Moderately stimulating drinks, to persons, who have been in the habit of drinking spirituous liquors.

Madeira Wine, with water, should be preferd to other drinks. For the purpose of removing Giddiness Garlic has been used with advantage. Dock Rush in his lecture on this subject, mentions the case of a person, who was troubled with giddiness, having dream'd a certain Parson directed him to take two or three cloves of Garlic a day. He awake made use of this remedy, and was perfectly cured. Exercise, this should be gentle and constant, either walking or riding, the latter mode is preferable; Fatigue from either mode is to be carefully avoided. The Patient should not sleep with his head low, or on his back, or too much on one side. For this purpose the Patient should lie on a hard bed, a Matrass is very good as it will induce him to be restless.

If the suppression of a discharge from an old sore, has taken place, Issues may very properly be employed, likewise Seatons in the back of the Neck. Avoiding crowded assemblies, and particularly guarding the feet against cold, for this purpose thick stockings, should be worn. Plasters of Burgundy Pitch, or what Doctor Rush particularly recommends, a Plaster of Shoemakers Wax, worn between the foot and the stocking. Costiveness must be guarded against, any mild laxicent purge, may frequently be exhibited.

Having brought the subject of Apoplexy, to a conclusion, it only remains for me, to tender my warmest thanks to the Professors, in this University, for their polite attention to me. It is my sincerest wish, that they may live to instruct thousands, who shall feel as grateful, to them as the author of this Essay.

Finis.